

TOPIC Military Information from the Engineer Training Area in Jessau-Rossau

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DATE OF CONTENT.

DATE OBTAINED.

DATE PREPARED 22 August 1952

REFERENCES

PAGES 2 ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE)

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1. At 9:30 a.m. on 17 June, an engineer training practice was in its initial stage at kilometer marker 268.3 near the south side of Brambach at the Dessau (M 52/ E 17) engineer training area. About 70 engineers emptied the water from about 30 pontoons and piled up four piles of timber about 50 meters apart. Five sentries each lay on either side of this place and scanned the surrounding area with field glasses. The pontoons were floated and moored. A motor boat subsequently towed 7 or 8 pontoons to each of the four piles on the shore. At 11:30 a.m., the engineers formed four groups and apparently were given instruction by officers. When the order to start construction was given at noon, the engineers took to the pontoons and started building ferries. They connected the pontoons which lay side by side and covered the pontoons with planking. Upon completion of their work they returned to the shore. The last group finished its work at 12:12 p.m. At 12:30 p.m. the engineers were ordered to start dismantling [redacted]

2. Beginning in late June 1952, the magazines, administrative buildings, kitchens and messhalls at the engineer camp between Klein-Kuehnau and Aken were converted into permanent structures, built close to the tents. Three colonels and 6 lieutenant colonels were in the camp. An MVD unit of about 50 was commanded by two lieutenant colonels. Several new officers of various ranks arrived on 10 July, and the same number of officers was transferred from the camp. [redacted] the tank unit was commanded by the lieutenant colonel who was subordinate to an engineer colonel. The tanks continually went to practices conducted south of the Klein-Kuehnau-Aken road between kilometer marker 57.7 and 56.9 in the state forest in Lodderitz. [redacted] The engineers handled only minor problems such as the building and dismantling of wooden bridges across ditches. [redacted] for the first time prefabricated wooden bridge sections of a type previously observed in Bernburg. They were loaded on five trucks. [redacted] On 12 July, the barracks installation in Bernburg was occupied by only a small guard detail. The bridge sections previously seen there were still in the barracks installation.

3. [redacted] the camp 1 km southeast of kilometer marker 273 on the Elbe River and the camp north of the Aken-Klein-Kuhsnau road and east of the Hirschleckerdamm were occupied by two different engineer units. The area between kilometer marker 272 and 273 was used as a water

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training site. The troops were quartered in low wooden structures and tents. On 7 July, 10 motorboats and 8 pontoons, guarded by a guard detail which was quartered in three tents, were at the training site. About 150 engineers received infantry training in the afternoon.

No changes were noticed in the Dessau-Hosselau Kaserne or in the hutment east of Gross Kuehnau. Motor vehicles were engaged in drivers practice. On 15, 18 and 19 July, the Elbe River was closed to traffic for 24 hour periods because of bridge building activities. ferries which had been constructed at the Hosselau water site were sent to Brambach and to the Steutz flax factory by water. a five weeks training period had been terminated. No other branch of service was involved. There was no cover from air observation or attack although large numbers of troops were concentrated at the building site. one smoke screen. On 9 July a company dismantling a bridge for more than two hours. the building times were rather short. The camp was improved further and gave the impression that its occupation would be increased.

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Comment. The above information contains additional details concerning the engineer practices in the area of Dessau-Aken. The permanent structures probably belong to the camp just north of the Aken-Elbe-Kuehnau road and west of the Hirschleckerdamm. The tank unit reported in paragraph 2 of the present report is fairly definitely believed to belong to the unidentified engineer regiment of the GOFG in Bernburg. Its absence from Bernburg is also indicated a report that the barracks installation are occupied by only a guard detail.

The components of the 21st Gds Mecz Div and the engineer battalions of the XXVIII Gds Mtz Rifle Corps which were unloaded in the training area between 18 and 22 June 1952 have not longer been reported from there recently. Their location, therefore, is not definitely established.

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